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Foundations of College Writing

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## **The Effects of Drinking on School Work**

### **Problem**

Receiving a college education comes at a price and a very expensive one too. Parents spend thousands of dollars to send their kids to college and yet many kids don't take advantage of the opportunity they are given. The social aspects of college like partying and drinking become a priority while school work is left behind. There are many reasons as to why many kids don't take school as serious and one of them is because of alcohol. Drinking for some become a way of life at college. It becomes a repetitive activity that people classify as fun.

Balancing school work and the social aspects of college can be very difficult. Many can't do it yet they continue to go out every weekend and drink alcoholic beverages. Drinking has so many more negative effects on achieving academic success than it has good ones. So why do kids do it? Weekend after weekend, drink after drink, kids keep doing the same thing over again. They are aware of the consequences it has on their school work and their well-being but they choose to do it anyways. I will use information from "High-Risk Drinking in College: What We Know and What We Need To Learn" (2005), "Problem Drinking Affects School Performance" (2014), "Surveying the Damage: Consequences of College Student Alcohol Abuse Consumption" (2005), and "Alcohol and Mental Health" (2014).

## Background

“An average student consumes an average of 3.4 drinks per week, B average students were drinking 4.5 drinks, C students were drinking 6.1 drinks, and D or F students typically drank 9.8 drinks” (Perkins 2002).<sup>1</sup> With this information given, it is clear that the intake of alcoholic beverages has an effect on how your grades turn out. The students with lower grades seem to have drank more alcohol than the students who have drank less. The difference is noticeable by the whole grade letter decreasing with more drinks in a student’s system.

One factor that contributes to lower grades with increased drinking is that drinkers experience memory loss. ”Memory loss during periods of heavy drinking, a common occurrence among alcoholics, is also reported by a significant number of students who drink” (Perkins 2002).<sup>2</sup> Learning and attaining the information in classes become harder because you are not fully aware which often times can make you fall behind. “In CAS, 10 percent of non-binge drinkers, 27 percent of occasional binge drinkers, and 54 percent of frequent binge drinkers reported at least one incident in the past year of having forgotten where they were or what they did while drinking.” Memory loss from drinking will not only effect your grades but could also put you in jeopardy of causing crimes and doing things you will regret the next day. Drinking heavily on school nights can and will affect then next morning and you will be missing class because of it. Missing class and experiencing memory loss will most definitely impact your school work and life and your grades will reflect it.<sup>3</sup> “Alcohol is a depressant, which means it can disrupt that balance, affecting our thoughts, feelings and actions – and sometimes our long-term mental health” (Alcohol and mental health 2014). For these exact reasons is why alcohol is

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<sup>1</sup> Introduce

<sup>2</sup> Insert

<sup>3</sup> Interpret

very dangerous to students and their health. If their long term mental health is impaired then it will show on their school work. Academic performance will not be as good and missing class will increase. Not feeling well after drinking just has an on-going cycle of poor work performance. Drinking adds unneeded stress to a college student. As if their workload wasn't hard enough, drinking adds an extra element to battle.

### **Method**

The consequences of drinking alcohol, the money, and time spent in college isn't worth your future. It only brings harm to your body and to academics. Nothing good essentially comes from drinking and partying except making a couple of friends? I interviewed some students at Bloomsburg. I asked a fair amount of people questions and so I feel like my results and explanations are accurate.

### **Findings**

I first asked them basic questions like what their major was and the difficulty and strictness of being in that department. I found that the majority of kids knew the consequences and the negative effects of drinking alcohol but yet they still continued to do it. Most of the students I interviewed had their first sip of alcohol between the ages of fifteen and eighteen. I found that the guys drank at an earlier age than the girls I interviewed. How early they drank often times had to do with their upbringing and if their families allowed them to drink or not at like a family party or special occasion.

Why do you drink?<sup>4</sup> I asked every single person I interviewed in hopes to get a better understanding. I found across the board that this answer was very common and that was that

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<sup>4</sup> Introduce

kids drank because there was nothing else to do. Many of them said that at Bloomsburg there wasn't much to do so they would always resort to drinking.<sup>5</sup> Another reason why they drank and partied was that everyone all shared a common goal of having fun. So with that being everyone's goal, it made it a lot easier to make friends and attain other people's numbers. Some said that they were very shy and quiet but with alcohol in their system they were very outgoing. Peer pressure often times was a factor as to why kids drank. A couple of people I had interviewed had never had a sip of alcohol until coming to college. Their friends they made in their dorm building, or classes drank and so when they all went out, they did not want to be the odd ball out. Other kids would offer them drinks so a lot of times, they didn't want to say no so they gave into what all the other kids were doing.

Excessive drinking and partying is classified as fun for many college students. But at a point it just gets to be irresponsibility. Missing class and poor quality work becomes a habit. The students who said they drank could noticeably tell a difference in their schoolwork and well-being. They got less sleep and had hangovers the next day making them not being able to focus on schoolwork. Students could tell they were not the same as they were if they hadn't drank. The students who drank admit that they missed a few classes because of alcohol consumption and from partying. Their GPAs and test grades also took a toll as well as their awareness in class. Many of the students who did go to class after a night of drinking said that they ended up falling asleep or just spacing out.

It is clear as to why many students drink and the effects it has on academics. Drinking has many more negative effects and in my opinion is not an activity that helps achieve academic

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<sup>5</sup> Insert

success.<sup>6</sup> It only decreases a student's chances of doing well and does not help them plan for the future.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the interviews and research I did, I can conclude that most kids are negatively affected by alcohol one way or another. There are many different reasons to why kids drink. Whether it is to blow off steam or make more friends, it is no excuse to let the social aspects become a priority. Academics should always be a priority and often times students forget about the thousands they are spending to get a solid education.

Interviewing students made me see different aspects from other kids and why they choose to drink. I found it interesting that kids who weren't doing so well in classes still continued to drink knowing the effects it has. As a student myself, I could already make a guess as to why other students drank but with my research and data, I can now say for sure I know why other kids do. In conclusion, students party and drink because they want to make friends, have fun, and because there is really nothing else to do on the weekends. To prevent harm to students who drink and decrease the numbers, all we can do is to not pressure one another. Making the dangers of drinking known to students can be life-saving and informing them on their future if they continue to be reckless.

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<sup>6</sup> Interpret

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